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OPEN DOOR = COLOR TV.

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WHEN A COMMERCIAL TELEVISION STATION OFFERED ONE WEEKLY HOUR OF FREE TIME FOR COLOR BROADCASTING, 17 JUNIOR COLLEGES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, PARTICIPATED IN A COOPERATIVE PRESENTATION OF A CREDIT COURSE IN "GREAT CULTURES OF THE WESTERN WORLD." THE COURSE WAS SELECTED TO REPRESENT THE HIGHEST QUALITY OF WORK BEING DONE IN THE COLLEGES AND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CAPABILITIES OF COLOR TELEVISION. FACTORS WHICH COMPLICATED THE PROGRAM WERE (1) THE MULTIPLICITY OF JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICTS, WITH A HISTORY OF COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS, (2) ATTENDANCE GAINS FOR THE COLLEGE OFFERING THE COURSE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE DISTRICTS OF STUDENT RESIDENCE, WITH RESULTANT CHANGES IN FINANCIAL SUPPORT, (3) UNION REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS WHO PRESENTED THE COURSE, WITH QUESTIONS OF FUNDS FOR UNION DUES, (4) OWNERSHIP OF TAPED PROGRAMS, (5) RESIDUALS, AND (6) REPRODUCTION RELEASES FOR SHOWING OF VARIOUS MATERIALS, INCLUDING FILMS OF WORKS OF ART. THE COOPERATIVE VENTURE SHOWS PROMISE FOR PROVIDING GREATER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY THROUGHOUT THE AREA. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN "JUNIOR COLLEGE JOURNAL," VOLUME 38, NUMBER 5, FEBRUARY 1968. (WO)

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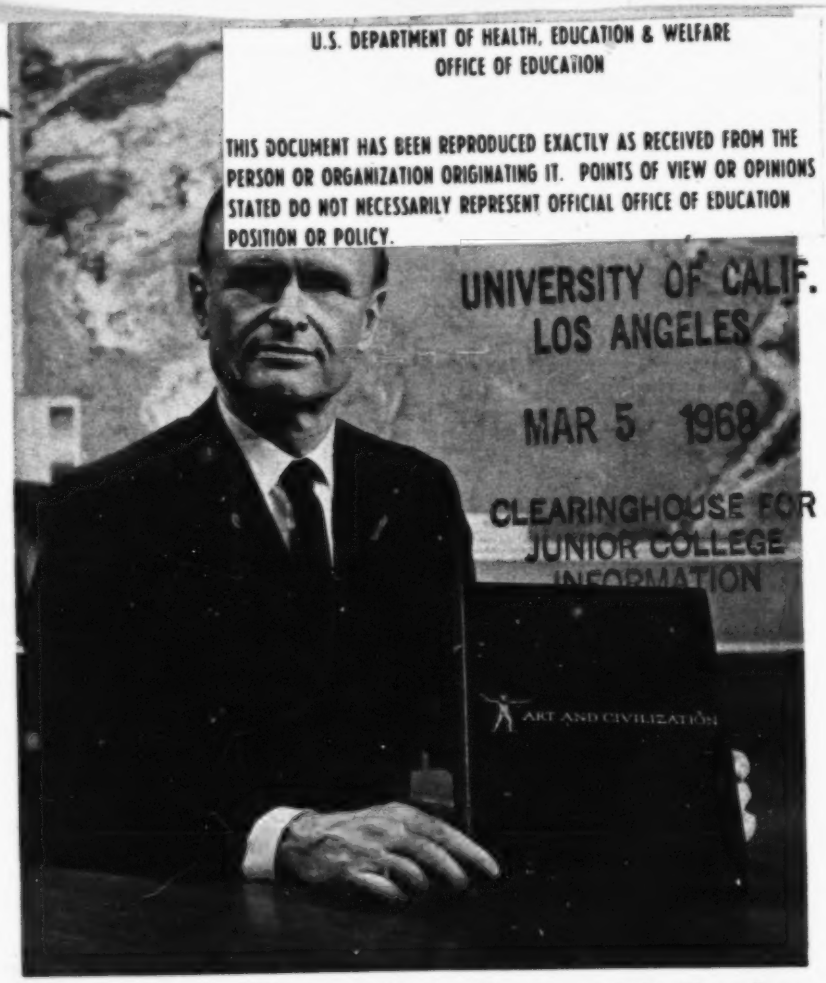

Lennox Tierney displays the textbook used in Pasadena City College's color television survey course, Art IA.

OPEN DOOR=COLOR TV

How Los Angeles County Junior Colleges Responded to an Offer of a Free One-Hour Segment on Commercial Color Television

By Leslie Wilbur

Last fall the community junior colleges of southern California made their credit course color television debut on a commercial VHF channel.

Art IA, Survey: "Great Cultures of the Ancient World" (3 units) is sponsored by Pasadena City College in cooperation with the Los Angeles County Office and it is taught by an outstanding art instructor, Lennox Tierney.

Both the institution and its professor represent more than one community junior college or one faculty; they symbolize the prolonged efforts, appreciable courage, and close cooperation of the dozen junior college districts within the boundaries of Los Angeles County.

The southern area of California has had a long history of the use of television, both with closed circuit classes and open circuit VHF credit courses. In addition, there have been numerous VHF short programs which were noncredit. A new dimension was introduced in the fall of 1966, when KABC TV offered the junior colleges within the county one hour weekly without cost on commercial color television. The offer triggered a series of problems and responses which required intensive and extensive activities on the part of the participating junior colleges within Los Angeles County. The answers to some of these problems may have implications for other junior colleges, some of which are likely to be faced with similar circumstances in the future. The answers are also illustrative of the importance of coordination and cooperation.

The junior colleges of Los Angeles County had the experience and reports of such large-scale efforts as Los Angeles City Junior College District and the Chicago Television College to draw from. However, no previous situation paralleled that which confronted a countywide venture. A series of decisions had to be made before any actual work could be done on the programs themselves, and to be workable, these decisions had to represent the consensus of the junior colleges within the county.

There are in Los Angeles County eighteen public junior colleges, which enroll over 180,000 students. Of the eighteen junior colleges, eleven are maintained by districts other than Los Angeles City Junior College District, which includes seven campuses. The total enrollment of the junior colleges in Los Angeles city district is approximately 80,000, leaving over 100,000 enrolled within the county but outside the Los Angeles city district. The Los Angeles County junior college student registration as of fall 1966, exceeded the enrollment of any state, except California. The magnitude of the existing enrollment demonstrated simultaneously that (1) a phenomenal number of students were already being served by well-established community colleges and (2) supplementary avenues to higher education might be useful to substantial numbers of continuing students as well as new students. Thus the offer of free commercial color television time and studio facilities stimulated enthusiastic but diffuse responses which had to be translated into immediate and decisive answers.

Beginning Steps

A major step in reaching decisions was that of forming the President's Council, representing the community junior colleges in Los Angeles County. At their first meeting, major issues for discussion were those of (1) whether the offer of the color time should be accepted by interested junior colleges in Los Angeles County, and (2) if the offer was accepted, what type of courses should be offered. On the first issue the reply of the participants was an enthusiastic "yes." They felt that the offer of free color television time was a rare opportunity, one which

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Bernard S. Myers, author of the text Art and Civilization, *used in the course, provides illustration for instructor Lennox Tierney's television presentation in Art IA.*

would go by default elsewhere if not accepted immediately by the junior colleges of the county.

The second decision involved a philosophical question, that of what kind of course should be offered. Early in the discussions the feeling had been expressed that perhaps the remedial work of the junior colleges should be done on television. After considerable discussion, the remedial course concept was rejected, not because remedial work was considered unimportant, but rather because it was felt that the casual viewer would have an unfortunately distorted perception of the junior college if his introduction was through televised teaching of remedial arithmetic or basic English. Instead, it was felt that the first color TV course should be a representative of the highest quality work being done in the junior colleges and that it should take advantage of the color capability of Channel 7, KABC.

In combination with these desires was also the fact that the deadline of the fall of 1967 was uncomfortably close. The third issue thus became who was willing and also ready in the immediate future to begin taping the programs for the fall. At the outset it was clear that the district would likely face the problem of production expenses considerably beyond whatever income might come from offering the program. The president of Pasadena City College, Armen Sarafian, after securing the permission of the board members, offered to accept the responsibility for presenting the first program. Subsequently the group accepted the offer of Long Beach City College to offer a spring program in health education, which in California is a requirement for the associate in arts degree.

Salary, Unions, Ownership, Residuals, Releases

In retrospect it seems that the easiest problems to solve were those of what kind of course to offer and who should offer it. The thornier problems were those which stemmed from the special situation in Los Angeles County and of the complex relationships between the individual junior college districts. In addition, there were the problems of the television instructor's salary, his union relationship, the assignment of ownership, the disposition of residuals, and the acquisition of releases.

The accumulative weight of the various problems was considerable, for they were not within the conventional experience of junior college teachers and administrators. Obviously the situation turned out to be much more complicated than was anticipated. The research reports coming from the monumental work at Chicago were useful; however, they did not parallel the Los Angeles County situation. Chicago represents a single junior college district working to meet problems resulting from a rapidly expanding junior college system. Chicago was faced with a shortage of facilities and a shortage of teachers, and television was a logical answer and means of rapid expansion reaching a large number of students relatively untouched by a community junior college. In contrast, Los Angeles County embraces a dozen different districts with well-established junior colleges, clearly defined district boundaries, and to some extent inherited attitudes of competition for students. As the colleges have grown in size, their competition for students has

gradually lessened, even though each student represents income allocated to the district by the state.

The issue of average daily attendance (A.D.A.) is a very real one for junior colleges in California in that each district is compensated by the state on the basis of each student hour of attendance. Consequently when the student enrolls in a junior college outside his district, there is a siphoning off of potential funds from the state. Thus the junior college which offers a TV program may perhaps gain state A.D.A. monies from increased enrollment while surrounding districts may lose students and the related state funds. These circumstances are in sharp contrast with those of a single district which can expand its service without a consequent loss in state income from decreased attendance.

Thorny Problems

Another problem which is not peculiar to Los Angeles, but which is likely to be raised in any junior college television program aired over commercial channels is that of whether or not the teacher joins the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. This issue, typical of many encountered, raises at least two others: (1) should the district pay the union dues for the teacher, (2) in joining the union, does he thereafter forfeit his ability to appear on television without being paid union scale?

An even thornier issue which is yet to be resolved is that of the ownership of the taped programs. The resolution of the issue of ownership still seems somewhat clouded in the Los Angeles area, but with ownership come the questions of residuals and permission releases. Releases themselves can be infinitely complex. For example, the paintings of artists who are long since dead may be reproduced over a commercial channel only with permission of the owners. Some of the color slides used in Pasadena's art course have come from points far distant from the junior college campus, quite often from private owners or galleries obscure or unknown.

The various problems have been offset by the prospect of a new audience, made possible by VHF. The increasing number of color television sets will enable a large segment of the community to view the professor's illustration in full color, which is an invaluable dimension for an art course. Each new factor adds to the potential audience, drawn from a population of approximately 8 million.

Among the new student-viewers we expect to see many persons who have never attended junior college. Shut-ins, older citizens, housewives—the host of persons who are unable to reach even the most convenient junior college—will have access to higher education through their television receivers. Whether or not they take the course for credit, they will have an invaluable new doorway to learning.

For decades the door to further education has been held ajar by the junior colleges of southern California. The seventeen junior colleges have established a reputation for extensive evening programs which are attuned to adult needs. Consequently the response to the new television program should be less dramatic than it would be in a region without extensive and long-standing programs for adults.

The program this fall represents the cooperative efforts of a number of institutions and individuals. The Los Angeles County Office of Schools furnished technical consultants as well as coordinative assistance in drawing together the junior colleges within the county. This office also alerted the junior colleges outside the county to expect a response to this commercial channel from their own students. More important perhaps, this course represents professional efforts, not only of the junior college presenting the program, but of those junior colleges who will be appearing subsequently and which are cooperating to make the program a success. It has called for and won leadership and a professional attitude of encouragement from the board members and the willingness of the faculties of the junior colleges to be involved in a program which transcends district and campus boundaries. The vital element which welds the various bodies together is that of cooperation, combined with a concern for the expansion of opportunity for all of the members of a larger community.

A Door Opened Wider

A salient lesson which emerges is that, like each junior college, each television effort is unique. Those in Los Angeles County had the advantage of the pioneer work done by other junior colleges; nevertheless they have had to interpret the implications of previous research in the light of the special circumstances that pertained to their own project. They cannot claim to have solved satisfactorily all of the problems which have confronted them, although they have had a reasonable amount of success with the majority of problems. It seems certain that other issues will arise which they at this point do not anticipate. Problems notwithstanding, the community junior colleges of Los Angeles County have made it clear that they are willing to experiment, to cooperate, and to explore a new avenue made available through a commercial color television channel.

Thanks to their willingness to experiment, the communities of southern California have encountered a door opened even wider to education in the form of the imaginative, colorful world of art.

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